

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USBERL 01038 011453Z
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INR-05 INRE-00
NSAE-00 SCS-06 CA-01 CIAE-00 PA-01 ICAE-00 HA-02
L-01 /039 W
-----123986 011503Z /64

O R 011410Z MAY 78
FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6757
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

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LIMDIS

E.O.11652: NA
TAGS: CASC, GE, GW, US
SUBJECT: PRISONER EXCHANGE

REF: USBERLIN 1037

1. AS PROMISED IN REFERENCE, THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES DETAILS OF THOMPSON/VAN NORMAN EXCHANGE.
2. THE FLIGHT FROM NEW YORK TO BERLIN WENT SMOOTHLY. THOMPSON WAS RELAXED, CALM AND COOPERATIVE ENTIRE TRIP. THERE WAS MUCH PRESS COVERAGE OF THOMPSON'S DEPARTURE FROM NEW YORK AS DEPARTMENT NO DOUBT ALREADY KNOWS. EMBASSY BONN OFFICER PFUND MET PARTY IN FRANKFURT AND TRAVELED TO BERLIN. BECAUSE INCOMING FLIGHT TO FRANKFURT WAS LATE, THE PARTY MISSED CONNECTING FLIGHT TO BERLIN AND HAD TO TAKE THE NEXT FLIGHT, ARRIVING ONE HOUR LATER THAN SCHEDULED.

3. THE EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE IN AN OFFICE IN THE US

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MISSION. IT WAS UNEVENTFUL AND TOOK ONLY ABOUT TEN MINUTES. THOMPSON, DR. VOGEL AND MRS. VOGEL DEPARTED THROUGH THE BACK GATE IN THE VOGELS' CAR ACCOMPANIED BY MISSION PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISER HUMPHREY AND FOLLOWED BY MISSION ASSISTANT PUBLIC SAFETY ADVISOR RABOURN IN MISSION CAR. VOGEL CAR CROSSED INTO EAST BERLIN AT INVALIDENSTRASSE AT 1:30 P.M. KALMANOWITCH DEPARTED

SEPARATELY.

4. THERE WAS MUCH PRESS AT THE FRONT GATE. VAN NORMAN WILL MEET THE PRESS THIS AFTERNOON FOR FIFTEEN MINUTES ACCOMPANIED BY MISSION PRESS SPOKESMAN. HE AGREED TO LIMIT HIS REMARKS AS SUGGESTED BY DEPARTMENT AND VOGEL. HE WILL NOT DISCUSS DETAILS OF HIS ACT OR OTHER MATTERS WHICH MAY PREJUDICE THOSE IN EAST GERMAN JAILS.

5. VAN NORMAN WAS DEBRIEFED BRIEFLY BY MISSION OFFICERS AND BY PFUND AND SMITH. HE DID SIGN LENGTHY STATEMENTS ABOUT THE INCIDENT AND OTHERS WHO WERE INVOLVED, INCLUDING A MR. MONTGOMERY WHO PUT HIM UP TO IT. HE DOES NOT HAVE COPIES OF THESE STATEMENTS. HE SAYS THAT HE AVOIDED CHARACTERIZING POLITICAL CONDITIONS IN THE US OR US POLITICAL LEADERS. OTHER DETAILS OF THE DEBRIEFING WILL BE SENT IN SEPTEL.

6. VAN NORMAN AND HIS MOTHER WILL DEPART FOR LONDON AT 5:00 P.M. LOCAL TIME AND WILL TRAVEL FROM LONDON TO MINNESOTA TOMORROW, MAY 2. GEORGE

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